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MONTANA LABOR MARKET

Monthly Review of
EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK, LABOR SUPPLY, LABOR DEMAND, CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

MONTANA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Division of Unemployment Compensation Commission of Montana
Gordon R. Bennett, Chairman

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FL. 291

MARCH-APRIL, 1969

STAGE SET FOR JOB UP TURN IN INDUSTRY AND FARM

LATE SPRING AFFECTS JOB UP-TURN — Spring was a little late in coming to Montana this year. A long hard winter carried over into March and most of April upsetting the usual hiring patterns for the season. Most outdoor work, including construction and agriculture, felt the adverse affects of the weather conditions. Hiring trends in other industry groups were also on the passive side while waiting for the weather to clear. The 900 workers added to non-farm payrolls in March brought total non-agricultural employment to 189,500. The job increase between February and March last year was 2,200. There were 5,800 more workers on industrial payrolls this March than the same month last year. A year ago the copper mining industry was absent from the March job scene because of the 8½-month strike which did not end until March 31, 1968.

FIVE INDUSTRY GROUPS POST MARCH JOB GAINS — Of the eight basic industry groups, employment was up in five, down in two, and remained unchanged in one during March. Trade industries headed the list of job increases, adding 700 workers. Employment in government advanced by 300, with all of this gain at the state and local levels. Service industries, including hotels and personal services, were up by 200. Job increments of 100 each were recorded in transportation and utilities, and in the finance, insurance and real estate group. Construction payrolls, down 200 during the month, reflected work suspension during bad weather. Manufacturing industries were short 200 workers. Mining, quarrying, and petro-

leum and natural gas production, employed 5,500 workers during March, showing no change from the prior month.

NON-FARM JOBS AVERAGED 195,300 IN 1968 — With a high of 206,600 non-farm workers on August payrolls and a seasonal low of 181,500 employed in February, non-farm employment for the 12 months of 1968 averaged out at 195,300. This was the highest yearly average non-farm figure ever achieved in Montana, and was 5,100 above the 1967 average. Employment in government, up 2,400, headed the list of 5 industry groups showing more employment in 1968 than in 1967. Other job increases in order were: Manufacturing, up 900; trade and service industries, up 1,100 each; and finance, insurance and real estate, up 300. Construction employment, at 11,700, kept the same total for both years. A decline in metal mining accounted for most of the 600 decline in jobs in the mining industry from 1967 to 1968. Transportation, communications and utility firms were short 100 workers from the 1967 average.

MAJOR JOB EXPANSION NEXT THREE MONTHS — Job totals in all industry groups will build up rapidly during the next three months until employment peaks in August or September. Construction forces will expand on a variety of buildings, highway, and other projects now in progress and as new contracts add to the work agenda. Logging and lumbering, in the throes of the spring break-up period for several months, will soon be at full activity. Tourist oriented industries are awakening for another season with workers being recalled to

national parks, dude ranches, and other resort facilities. Main street activity, already on the rise, will demand more cooks, waitresses, maids, service station attendants, sales clerks, and office workers for the busy summer season. Recruitment of crews for railroad maintenance usually starts during these months. Food processing and forest service activities enter the employment picture in June and July and will help absorb some of the youth who enter the labor market during the summer season. The brisk farm hiring trends, already set, will continue until harvests are completed this fall. Already serious shortages of farm and ranch hands persist in a few areas. The increased pace of labor demand in both farm and industry will add up to a healthy employment climate for this summer season.

JOB FOR YOUTH — A SUMMER CAMPAIGN — Thousands of high school and college students will enter the summer labor market with the end of school terms. Some are already registering at the local employment offices to beat the traffic when job hunting begins in earnest. Some of these young people have had work experience while others are fledglings in the labor market waiting to test their wings. All local offices of the Montana State Employment Service will participate in a nationwide youth opportunity campaign to aid these young people in their job search. Youth Job campaigns of past years have been modestly successful, with cooperation from employers, labor unions, government agencies, church groups, and civic and community organizations.

LABOR TURNOVER RATES IN MANUFACTURING AND MINING INDUSTRIES

(Per 100 Employees)

(Compiled in cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	ACCESSION RATE						SEPARATION RATE					
	Total			New Hire			Total			Quit		
	Feb. 1969	Jan. 1969	Feb. 1968	Feb. 1969	Jan. 1969	Feb. 1968	Feb. 1969	Jan. 1969	Feb. 1968	Feb. 1969	Jan. 1969	Feb. 1968
All Manufacturing	2.5	2.9	3.0	2.3	2.5	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.5	1.6	1.5	1.3
Durable Goods	3.0	3.8	3.5	2.6	3.2	2.8	3.6	3.7	3.5	1.8	1.9	1.4
Primary Metal	3.6	4.1	1.3	3.1	2.5	.6	3.2	2.6	.6	1.6	1.6	.3
Nondurable Goods	1.6	.8	1.9	1.5	.8	1.1	1.8	1.9	3.5	1.0	.7	1.1
All Mining	3.3	4.1	7.0	1.0	1.8	2.1	3.1	11.3	6.4	1.4	1.9	1.5
Metal Mining	3.0	2.5	1.9	.3	.3	.1	2.1	2.6	3.1	.6	.5	.9

* Less than .05.

Along the Hiring Line – Field Summary for March

ANACONDA, Deer Lodge, Philipsburg — The 62 job placements at smelter operations accounted for majority of monthly job hires. The rebounding economy also shows in increased demand for trade industry workers. The forces of spring also brought more labor demand in all other industry groups including construction, agriculture, and woods work.

BILLINGS, Columbus, Laurel, Red Lodge, Roundup — Construction was a dominant factor on the March job scene. Job totals up in building and highway projects. New bid lettings included a \$1.3 million shopping center, a \$400,000 dormitory, a \$175,000 church, and a \$150,000 apartment complex, among others. Normal seasonal job trends existed in trade and transportation groups. Worker shortage occupations included mechanics, health services, electronic servicemen, and farm hands.

BOZEMAN, Ennis, Three Forks, Trident — Seasonal job upswing now initial stages with job levels edging upward in all groups except logging which is still held in check by spring break-up conditions. Sawmills operating full scale on stockpiled logs, a situation which could be reversed if logging remains down. Several building and highway projects should start in 30 days. Farm labor demand beginning in earnest for spring work activities.

BUTTE, Virginia City, Whitehall — Seasonal upturn in outdoor building and highway construction jobs main factor in reduced unemployment during the month. Job totals in metal mining remain fairly constant with little new hiring. Trade and service firms, looking to the summer season, preparing for staff increments. Farm labor demand at minimum.

CUT BANK — The trade industry was the main force behind new job activity during the month. Several new buildings, oil field operations, and the woods products at Browning added up to a fairly good spring employment scene. More farm jobs developing for field work and livestock operations.

DILLON — Spring work in industry and farm shaping up in good force. Good schedule of building in progress. Wet weather held back work on highway projects. New \$150,000 motel

MONTANA CIVILIAN WORK FORCE

(In Thousands)

	Mar. '69	Feb. '69	Mar. '68	Feb. '69 to Mar. '69	Mar. '68 to Mar. '69
Civilian Work Force	260.6	253.9	260.8	6.7	.2
Total Employment	246.0	240.1	242.6	5.9	3.4
Total Nonag. Employment	217.9	216.8	212.0	1.1	5.9
(Nonag. Wage and Salary)	189.5	188.6	183.7	1.0	5.8
Total Agr. Employment	28.1	23.3	30.6	4.8	-2.5
Labor Management Disputes	*	*	3.6	—	-3.6
Total Unemployment	14.6	31.8	14.6	.8	—
Percent Unemployment	5.6	5.4	5.6	—	—
U. S. Unemployment Rate	3.5	3.7	3.8	—	—
•Less Than 50					

should be completed May 1. Construction of \$600,000 hospital to start later this season. Farm labor demand at good volume.

GLASGOW, Fort Peck, Malta, Opheim — Economic activity at low ebb with outdoor work limited by weather and main street feeling effects of reduced business volume due to closure of air base. The AVCO Corporation operations at the base now employ approximately 100. Slight demand for farm workers.

GLENDIVE, Circle, Wibaux — Job trends in industry and farm looking up after the winter slowdown. Good list of construction including interstate highway projects, mental retardation center, and airport improvements. A federal contract to a local firm will employ 40 people for 18 months. Main street firms adding help for the summer session.

GREAT FALLS, Choteau, Fort Benton, Stanford — March job placements were at highest point since 1966 with trade, service, and private households accounting for 72% of March jobs. Weekly additions to smelter payrolls were at a moderate pace. Construction job totals advancing as favorable weather spurs increased activity. Current shortage of farm and ranch help at serious stage.

HAMILTON, Stevensville — Labor market trends on the passive side with logging in the grip of the spring break-up period and construction waiting for favorable weather. Main street jobs in trade and service kept fairly even. Most farm labor demand for potato cellar work.

HAVRE, Chinook, Harlem — A late spring delayed start of most outdoor work, but job outlook now good for the summer work season. New construction includes \$250,000 freight transfer dock facilities, \$200,000 in building remodeling work, and a recreational complex on the Rocky Boy

Indian Reservation. Farm labor demand picking up with warmer weather.

HELENA, Boulder, Garrison, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs — Economic conditions show improvement over last year with increased construction and anticipated start of Model City action later this year. \$10 million in new state buildings planned next 2 years. Steady demand for clerical and service workers during March. Farm labor demand on gradual upturn with start of spring work season.

KALISPELL, Columbia Falls, Whitefish — New unemployment increased during the month with spring break-up conditions causing suspension of logging and slowdown in heavy construction projects. These conditions also reduced volume of main street business. Another month should see good upturn in both logging and construction. Processing of the 1968 potato crop provided most of the new agricultural jobs.

LEWISTOWN, Harlowton, Rygate, Winnett — Job placements in industry and farm up 40% from year ago. Major activity in area includes work on missile remodification, employing 300; a \$100,000 church addition, and three building remodeling projects. Main street jobs in trade and service at good levels.

LIBBY — Large surplus of construction workers being liquidated as Libby Dam work projects become active. Spring break-up affected logging and resulted in 265 new unemployment claims. Mill job totals remain fairly constant. Forest service personnel being recalled for another season's work. Trade and service jobs at good volume.

LIVINGSTON, Big Timber — Improving weather brought more job activity in most outdoor industries. Logging still down and most mills have short crews due to log shortages. Job totals edging upward in construc-

TEN YEARS OF MONTANA INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT TOTALS BY MONTHS (in Thousands)

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Aver.
1959	155.3	153.2	155.9	162.2	167.5	174.0	177.5	179.2	169.9	165.6	161.5	159.4	165.1
1960	152.7	152.5	156.1	163.5	168.4	175.8	176.9	177.7	171.8	171.6	167.5	164.5	166.8
1961	156.9	154.8	156.1	160.2	165.1	173.3	176.0	178.1	176.8	172.4	169.0	162.2	167.1
1962	158.3	158.2	159.6	166.2	172.4	180.1	180.5	181.2	178.6	176.6	175.1	173.5	171.7
1963	163.9	163.0	165.0	170.2	175.1	181.0	182.3	183.8	181.5	179.7	176.6	173.6	174.6
1964	166.2	164.3	165.1	169.1	174.2	182.4	185.5	187.2	184.9	182.2	178.4	175.4	176.2
1965	167.9	167.4	168.9	174.4	179.8	188.7	189.6	192.1	189.9	188.1	185.3	183.6	181.3
1966	173.9	172.6	174.2	180.2	185.4	195.6	198.2	199.2	195.8	191.2	187.6	186.9	186.7
1967	179.9	178.5	180.1	184.7	188.1	199.1	201.1	197.8	196.3	193.7	192.2	191.0	190.2
1968	181.6	181.5	183.7	190.0	195.4	203.9	201.3	206.6	203.5	199.5	196.7	197.6	195.3
1969	188.7	188.6	189.5*										

*Preliminary Estimate—Employment estimates for 1967 and 1968 revised on basis of more complete reports. Industrial detail from Jsn. 1967 to date will be supplied in future supplement to this publication.

Along the Hiring Line – Field Summary for March

tion, trade, service, and railroad industries. Yellowstone Park hiring starting.

MILES CITY, Baker, Broadus, Ekalaka, Jordan, Terry—Weather and road conditions delayed spring activity in oil fields and some construction. Work on a few building projects kept active. Trade and service jobs at seasonal levels with little hiring. Farm labor demand on the rise.

MISSOULA, Arleen, Drummond, Superior—Spring labor market activity on the slow side with the annual shutdown in logging a dominant factor. Construction and farm hiring not yet up to par due to late spring. Good schedule of projects awaits favorable weather. Most lumber mills hold good job totals but little hiring.

POLSON—Sparked by good lumber prices and demand, area economic trends look bright. Automation cut 40 workers from one mill but hiring at others took up most of the loss. Work now underway on 7 mile highway project. Farm labor demand mainly for work in potato cellars.

SHELBY—Increased demand on the farm front created most of the new jobs during the month, with 61 job placements compared with 18 in the non-farm segments. Trade and service jobs at season levels prior to increased hiring for summer months.

SIDNEY — Optimistic trends cover both the industrial and farm fronts this season. A good construction year seen with several major projects including \$1½ million hospital and airport improvement. Trade and service expected to share in the healthy trends. Shortages of farm and ranch help expected throughout the season.

THOMPSON FALLS, Hot Springs—Weather-caused downturn in logging accounted for most of new unemployment during the month. Some of the idled men were absorbed in lumber mill activities. Construction still on the slow side. Stable trends in trade and service firms prior to seasonal upswing.

WOLF POINT, Plentywood, Scobey—Small job gains evident in construction mainly for interior work. Other projects delayed by wet ground, a situation which also affects oil exploration and drilling activities. Job trends in trade and service below last year. Farm work season several weeks behind year ago.

(1) Estimates include all full and part-time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay during the pay period ending nearest the 15th of the month. Proprietors, firm members, personnel of the armed forces, domestic servants and self-employed persons are excluded.

(2) Preliminary estimates based on return from samples of 765 selected Montana establishments.

(3) Figures previously released have been revised on return from 1,105 such establishments.

(4) Includes fabricated metal products, machinery except electrical, furniture, stone and clay products.

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN MONTANA (1)

(Compiled in cooperation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT			NET CHANGE	
	Mar. 1969 (2)	Feb. 1969 (3)	Mar. 1968	Feb. '69 to Mar. '69	Mar. '68 Against Mar. '69
NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES	189,500	188,600	183,700	900	5,800
Manufacturing	22,700	22,900	19,900	— 200	2,800
Durable goods	14,800	15,000	12,400	— 200	2,400
Lumber and timber products	7,900	8,200	8,500	— 300	— 600
Primary metal ind's.	4,600	4,600	1,100	— 00	3,200
Other (2)	2,300	2,200	2,500	100	— 200
Nondurable goods	7,900	7,900	7,500	00	400
Food and kindred products	4,400	4,700	3,800	— 300	600
Printing and publishing	1,700	1,700	1,700	00	00
Petroleum refining	800	400	1,000	400	— 200
Other (3)	1,000	1,100	1,000	— 100	00
Mining	5,500	5,500	3,900	00	1,600
Metal mining	2,700	2,700	1,000	00	1,700
Coal, quarrying and nonmetallic	800	800	1,000	00	— 200
Petroleum-natural gas production	2,000	2,000	1,900	00	100
Contract Construction	9,000	9,300	9,900	— 300	— 900
Contractors, building construction	1,600	1,700	2,600	— 100	— 1,000
Contractors, other than building	3,700	3,700	3,900	00	— 200
Contractors, special trade	3,700	3,900	3,400	— 200	300
Transportation and utilities	17,300	17,200	17,200	100	100
Interstate railroads	6,800	6,700	6,800	100	00
Transportation except railroads	4,500	4,500	4,300	00	200
Utilities including communication	6,000	6,000	6,100	00	— 100
Trade	44,400	43,700	43,000	700	1,400
Wholesale trade	9,300	9,200	8,600	100	700
Retail trade	35,100	34,500	34,400	600	700
General merchandise and apparel	6,400	6,300	6,100	100	300
Food and liquor stores	5,200	5,300	5,300	— 100	— 100
Eating and drinking establishments	8,700	8,100	8,400	600	300
Automotive and filling stations	7,500	7,600	7,400	— 100	100
Retail trade not elsewhere classified	7,300	7,200	7,200	100	100
Finance, insurance and real estate	7,600	7,500	7,300	100	300
Services and miscellaneous	28,900	28,700	28,800	200	100
Hotels, rooming houses, camps, etc.	3,200	3,000	3,000	200	200
Personal services	2,200	2,200	2,300	00	— 100
Other (4)	23,500	23,500	23,500	00	00
Government	54,100	53,800	53,700	300	400
Federal	11,100	11,100	11,600	00	— 500
State and local	43,000	42,700	42,100	300	900
Great Falls Area (Cascade County)	23,600	23,500	22,100	100	1,500
Non-Agri. Total	3,400	3,400	2,200	00	1,200
Manufacturing	1,400	1,300	1,500	100	— 100
Contract construction	1,900	1,900	2,000	00	— 100
Transportation and utilities	6,100	6,100	6,000	00	100
Trade (retail and wholesale)	1,300	1,300	1,300	00	00
Finance, insurance & real estate	4,500	4,500	4,200	00	300
Service and miscellaneous (5)	5,000	5,000	4,900	00	100
Government					
Billings Area (Yellowstone County)	26,900	26,400	26,400	500	500
Non-Agri. Total	3,000	2,900	2,700	100	300
Manufacturing	1,200	1,200	1,600	00	— 100
Contract construction	2,800	2,800	2,800	00	00
Transportation and utilities	8,400	8,200	8,000	200	400
Trade (retail and wholesale)	1,400	1,400	1,300	00	100
Finance, insurance & real estate	5,300	5,100	5,200	200	100
Service and miscellaneous (5)	4,800	4,800	4,800	00	00
Government					

(5) Includes apparel, chemicals, and miscellaneous manufacturing products.

(6) Includes commercial trade schools, auto repair services and garages, miscellaneous repair services and hand trades, motion pictures, amusements and recreation,

medical and health, law offices and professional services, non-profit membership organizations and business not otherwise classified.

(7) Same as (6) above. Also includes hotels, rooming houses, camps, personal services and mining.

COMPARISON OF BASIC LABOR MARKET ACTIVITIES IN MARCH, 1969 AND MARCH, 1968

Employment Service Office	New Job Applicants				Jobseekers in File				Job Placements						UI Claims*			
	Mar. 1969		Mar. 1968		Mar. 1969		Mar. 1968		March, 1969			March, 1968			Wk. 3-28			
	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.		
Anaconda	119	32	93	30	403	111	314	109	78	19	97	37	23	14	37	13	161 196	
Billings	379	133	491	156	1,930	703	2,659	830	258	90	348	147	342	111	453	177	1,174 1,044	
Bozeman	243	49	190	46	524	186	328	101	148	46	194	31	140	28	168	51	235 173	
Butte	217	33	274	86	1,083	333	1,363	452	43	6	49	8	30	9	39	9	509 772	
Cut Bank	44	9	36	11	525	172	291	126	20	20	40	11	24	40	64	20	169 180	
Dillon	66	16	50	17	161	45	139	34	33	49	82	34	30	85	115	57	76 102	
Glasgow	37	10	71	11	224	64	208	47	28	6	34	5	46	6	52	15	135 137	
Glendive	66	15	100	23	131	52	264	59	76	8	84	25	39	52	91	14	84 87	
Great Falls	522	93	484	98	1,824	514	2,065	574	261	141	402	107	246	136	382	99	879 828	
Hamilton	68	23	69	20	316	128	319	116	28	14	42	10	34	21	55	23	210 198	
Havre	73	17	63	16	250	110	218	94	42	35	77	31	36	76	112	29	205 163	
Helena	196	30	276	54	582	161	779	207	95	34	129	51	77	24	101	35	293 404	
Kalispell	229	67	273	75	1,160	422	1,094	379	92	9	101	37	108	9	117	34	896 815	
Lewistown	47	14	38	10	197	69	198	49	47	136	183	30	46	80	126	31	131 102	
Libby	163	80	140	48	1,046	485	461	166	16	—	16	5	10	—	10	—	759 538	
Livingston	62	9	68	18	314	78	255	77	62	16	78	23	61	16	77	37	205 193	
Miles City	82	18	77	15	214	66	289	69	58	27	85	23	60	24	84	38	127 115	
Missoula	630	151	480	129	1,659	488	1,487	501	171	14	185	56	166	26	192	67	720 538	
Poison	58	17	36	6	231	78	224	73	46	18	64	29	29	28	57	11	160 154	
Shelby	17	4	46	12	141	55	148	49	18	61	79	7	37	70	107	16	94 87	
Sidney	61	16	48	17	158	53	221	69	32	49	81	11	22	63	85	24	129 128	
Thompson Falls	34	11	28	11	194	67	200	69	10	3	13	4	17	17	6	155	111	
Wolf Point	24	6	43	22	195	65	165	67	13	6	19	6	16	14	30	8	84 103	
Billings YOC	250	23	293	9	566	44	611	21	78	5	83	13	100	3	103	8	— —	
TOTALS	3,687	876	3,767	940	14,028	4,639	14,300	4,338	1,753	812	2,565	741	1,739	935	2,674	822	7,590	7,168

*Includes 746 Claims of the Fed. U.C. Program 732 same a year ago.

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS IN SELECTED MONTANA INDUSTRIES

(Produced in cooperation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)
(Hours and earnings data exclude administrative and salaried personnel)

INDUSTRY	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	Mar. (1) 1969	Feb. (2) 1969	Mar. 1968	Mar. (1) 1969	Feb. (2) 1969	Mar. 1968	Mar. (1) 1969	Feb. (2) 1969	Mar. 1968
All Manufacturing	\$135.41	\$136.37	\$128.00	40.3	41.2	40.0	\$3.36	\$3.31	\$3.20
Durable Goods	136.04	137.67	127.30	41.1	42.1	40.8	3.31	3.27	3.12
Primary Metals	131.70	131.70	*	40.4	40.4	*	3.26	3.26	*
Nondurable Goods	131.83	131.87	129.41	38.1	31.9	38.4	3.46	3.39	3.37
Food and Kindred Products	123.63	125.55	120.48	39.0	40.5	39.5	3.17	3.10	3.05
All Mining	146.16	145.46	114.70	42.0	41.8	35.4	3.48	3.48	3.24
Metal Mining	136.00	136.34	*	40.0	40.1	*	3.40	3.40	*
Communications and Utilities	128.59	128.31	116.80	38.5	38.3	37.8	3.34	3.35	3.09

(1) Preliminary estimates. (2) Figures previously released have been revised on more complete returns.

* Data not available due to copper strike.

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